

GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE BLIND
November 04, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order: Chair, Lloyd Schmitz called the meeting to order at the DelDot Building in Dover, Delaware at 10:00 a.m.

Roll Call: Council Chair Lloyd Schmitz, Deidre Morris, Jillian Queen, Jim Law, Marjorie Deska, Ken Rolph.
Absent: Nancy Frankl

Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI) Staff: Director Elisha Jenkins, Deputy Director Dava Newnam, Administrative Specialist Michele Hamilton.

Members of the Public: Kat Schmitz, Larry Byler, Patti Addison, Melodye May

Welcome: Lloyd Schmitz welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the new DVI Deputy Director, Dava Newnam.

Minutes Jillian Queen reported that she corrected a couple of typos. Motion made by Deidre Morris to accept the minutes as corrected, seconded by Ken Rolph. Motion carried.

Council Vacancy: Lloyd announced that Patti Addison may be our next Council member. He has recommended Patti to the Governor's office.

Directors Report: Elisha Jenkins

DIB findings: DIB Direct labor rate was below the 75% requirement. Using the wrong National Industry for the Blind forms. Made sure evaluations were on hand. Ratio was ~65%, prior to contract. Reviewing sewing and engraving. Lloyd doesn't understand why there is a ratio problem. Sales in the past two weeks were \$32,000 and it dipped lower than that. Must make \$40K to break even for that period.

DIB RFP: Is it ready? Council was under the impression it was pretty well ready. Is there an update? It was supposed to go out on the 1st, but there are Procurement questions that we are not prepared, nor have the authority, to respond. Debra Bradl, Dava, and Elisha developed a draft, but it needs to be refined. Not submitted to the OMB yet. Not sure they can put out that type of RFP. Ken: Can we hope to have this RFP done by the next meeting. Progress is halted. Not the traditional RFP. It's going to take longer. Elisha will update and send that out. Is it the intent to get it done during this administration? Yes.

Is Delaware DVI keeping DIB? Reaching out to Management Services to see how this can work. Kevin will only be in his position for another month. Target date? It was Nov 1. We have regular and frequent contact and it is listed in our transition documents as something critical to DVI. Is the scope of DIB services and DIB bidding preserved for VI people? Yes. There are priorities and to retain current employees.

NFB Conference Rob Schmidtkoffer presented at the NFB conference in Lewes concerning the new BEP requirements and gave an overview of the program. 15-20 people in attendance. Overall positive. Some questions were about the accessibility of vending machines, credit score could be lowered and background check entering the BEP program. Lloyd said that there is speech output for snack vending machines. People that attended were interested? Yes. Public meeting January 11, 2017 via both DVI offices and via teleconference. All in the process. Is it on the calendar of events on the website? Elisha said it can be.

Smyrna Rest Stop: Follow up regarding the vending machines. Received the proposal, discussion, but no agreement reached. Will consult with Deputy Attorney General.

Vending Machines: Jim Law: Is DelDot coordinating? They own the machines. They want a profit? \$75K-80K guaranteed to them, then 10% additionally over \$80K. Who is not pleased? DVI, it is DelDot's proposal. They came up to \$80K and DVI wants 10% above \$200K. DelDot is offering storage which is a huge advantage.

Del Tech Cafeteria completed since 08/22. Must finalize some things that are not in line with the contract. Some outside catering has been done privately instead of the cafeteria. Food will be done by an outside vendor and drinks would be covered by the cafeteria, but that is not in the contract.

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Business Plan? No, it has not been done. Incoming vendors have to have a business plan. Why wouldn't you require it from the Agency. Lloyd respectfully disagreed with Elisha. Location and percentages should be the same. Bidding on locations before having a plan; the business world doesn't work that way. Lloyd: In order to be profitable, develop a business plan for the targets of income vs. expenditures. Without a business plan, you don't know where you are going. Business plan by next meeting? Yes.

Gift Shop: Gift shop projection? Dava and Elisha are reassigning, making observations of the correct product. Improvements? The Council will meet there in December. Discussed: Boxes behind the counter, disorganization. Consider another person with retail experience. There is no supervision, training or experience. Recall Nancy Frankl's observations and recommendations. Jim Law asked if any of the personnel working there can be a manager? The goal is to make the place work. It is DVI's responsibility to oversee the location until it is turned over to a VI vendor. Food? Possibly not an approved product.

Blind Vendors: BEP has five blind vendors, four DVI staff overseeing One report a month from locations. Is Rob in charge of that? Yes. Deb Bradl involved? No. Meeting in December to continually make program improvements and follow the recommendations of this Council.

Vending location Route 99-4 retired in July? The P&L shows the location is broken up. Lloyd sent Elisha an inquiry about the status of the vacancy. Response? It was assigned to another vendor. It has either been transferred, made into a satellite, or annexed. Which designation will determine if it is available for placement. Elisha will look into it. Sent a year of P&L reports. Lloyd wants to contact Dava concerning the BEP financial reports. The reports are not clear, they are cluttered and inaccurate. Dava said she would like to restructure the reports.

Vocational Rehabilitation: VR hosted events throughout the state. Three consumers placed. Dover Down, Woodbridge HS, Courtyard of Delaware. VR placements 29 remain the same as last year. They have hired two transition counselors start date Nov 14. Milford? No, NC. The caseload could require them to see students in Milford area or Sussex. People could be better allocated throughout the agency. VR, TVIs consider placements. O&M person attended training.

Staff assignments: VR administrator, Senior SS admin. Debra Bradl, oversees VR and brings support to the team. 1 covers Kent/Sussex. 1 Kent/NC 1, NC 2 transitional- based out of NC, but statewide. New person coming in. All full time. No part time. Four employment specialists: Kent/Sussex, Kent/NC; and NC. A person from the Delaware Psychiatric Center has been assigned to DVI, working with supportive employment, who was included in the four employment specialists mentioned. Employment navigator? No. The caseloads are assigned by location? Caseloads are referral based. 1 vacant but 2 support people for VR.

Staff Training: UD is interested in bringing a certificate program for TVI. Start a program in the Fall. Teachers with experience for a 2-year program. College of New Jersey. Jerry Petrof with the teaching staff. No updates with DOE. More documents needed for the principal. More principal applications? No. 6 applications for TVIs. Oct 3 new TVI with 20 years of experience started in Milford.

New staff: One of the pre-requisites for the TVI position was to be certified in braille within two years. Currently on staff three new hires that cannot teach braille. One that will start classes in the summer. Background only in special ed and early childhood. Two other employees who graduate soon. Trainer educator/technology person begins Nov 14. Disability? No. Were any of the new hires disabled? No.

Braille certification Jillian Queen said the state requires TVIs to be certified TVIs, not Library of Congress certified braillists. The TVI program has 1-2 semester classes of braille required to become a certified TVI. She doesn't agree with it, but it is the DOE approved criteria.

Conference: Christine Roman did a presentation on cortical vision impairment (other disabilities). Sat. morning Dr. Lehman did a presentation on VI and opportunities. Great conference. VI with more disabilities are served more. Need percentages. Elisha will provide.

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Survey Monkey: Agency is pursuing Survey Monkey as an opportunity to receive feedback and to review satisfaction and increase our response rate.

Budget Hearing November 15 Legislative Hall. 1st floor, Senate Chambers on the right.

Town meetings? VR advisory council. Melodye will report. Yes, it is possible to do it again.

We're still going to do phone calls, but increasing opportunities for feedback. Satisfied customers? Independent Living, O&M Yes. VR not so much.

Independent Living: Melodye May

ILS: provides Independent Living Services and devices to enable as much independence as possible. New DVI intaker - Helen Harper Elzey. Five vision rehab: 2 Milford and 3 upstate. Referrals spread across the state. Complete an assessment first. Communication, reading mail, etc. create the "needs" of the consumer. Home visits, Rehab instruction, alternative living skills, low-vision doc clinics. Low-vision doctors provide the medical assessment. Peer support program, Patty Addison, through BlindSight DE. Training over the phone, group meetings. Internal/External referrals. Lloyd asked: When there are mobility issues, do you refer? Yes. Do you have authority to refer to VR? Yes. Absolutely. In NC, you have the kitchen, skill center. Is it used? Yes. Shared space, we have priority. Vision Rehab Therapist, sensitivity training, braille training. Two braille classes in NC. How many participants? Melodye will provide that information. Broken down by grant. Participants in braille and number of consumers in each location? Kat Schmitz: Do you still do the braille discrimination test? Yes. Initial assessment? Yes. Patty Addison: Peer support all the recommendations are made. Statewide funding, telephone support is supported through DVI.

Assessment and Service Process: Demographic, primary reason for seeking services, doctor's report, other disabilities. Gather medical, prescription management, adjustment and support, theirs and their family, support groups, referral to the peer support, ask communication, and if they have difficulties with using print, telephone, telling time, braille instruction and training. ADL skills, money management, set at the time of the assessment, Kitchen skills. Safety, cutting, etc. Cleaning, etc. grooming, identifying clothing. Low vision: documents, television. Devices prescribed to them and alternative low tech. Computer, typing, training, internal unit referrals. VRTs portable devices. Showing people how to use the iphone and ipad. Service familiarity. Local connections. Training in any other area of DVI. Diabetics as well. There is a survey that is conducted at the end of their services.

Communication: Debra Tally newsletter? Workshops listed? New ILS monthly newsletter. Robocall how many are on it? 2800. Ability to break it down by population? DVI has a website with a calendar. Matt updates. Melodye follow up? No, but she can. Sends out emails to consumers and posts on the Facebook page. 600 likes on the Facebook page.

Tech Fair: Technology and Community Resource Fair. Most successful this year. More than just technology, technology with banks, election, bloodbank, flu shots, BlindSight Delaware brought products to the Fair. 150 participants. VI participants? Melodye will get that information. Alice Johnson promoted the event. DVI recognition? Yes, that is in the works. Melodye: Statistics 322, last year 328. 18-54 in 2016; 125 in 2015; 133 in 2014.

Plans and Events: State Independent Living Plan year was approved. Identified as the designated state agency. MOU to the relationship. Low Vision provider DE Eye Institute. Implementing a new program "Matter of Balance." Volunteer DE partnership. Hopefully at the beginning of the year. Feedback from NFB as well as the public meetings to provide more opportunities and workshops. Kent Sussex Industries, Roxann Williams in discussion, Urban gardening. ILS with DVI, expanded core curriculum. Older individuals need workshops for iPhone and iPads. UEB braille training through Hadley.

Life Conference Jan 2017. Is ILS doing anything? Exhibiting. Do you have a brochure? Yes.

Did not submit bid for non-motorized sports? Bid is still open. Lloyd: Several opportunities and state park has 1.7 million visitors. Open BEP in Jan. One location was removed.

Public Comments:

Rob Keller was awarded the Delaware Democrat of the Year.

Larry Byler: Gift Shop. His mom has products to sell. Called Rob no response. Never follow up.

Patti Addison: She and Melodye presented Sensitivity Training in September and simulations. Drivers instruction. Verbal communication. Very receptive. It was very informative.

Dava Newnam: Thanked the Council for their welcome and informative meeting.

The next meeting will be at the Smyrna Rest Stop on December 2, 2016 at 10:00 am.

Call for Adjournment. Marjorie Deska made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jillian Queen.

Adjournment Lloyd Schmitz adjourned the meeting at 12:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jillian H. Queen

Jillian Queen

Council Member